

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, and 10-12 are pending herein.

I. Non-final status of Office Action.

Applicants respectfully note that the Office Action Summary Sheet indicates that the Office Action of May 1, 2006 is **non-final**. However, page 5 of the Office Action indicates that the Office Action is final.

Applicants' attorney respectfully contacted the Examiner on October 16, 2006 regarding the non-finality of the Office Action, and the Examiner respectfully confirmed that the Office Action was indeed **non-final**, as it was the first Office Action after a Request for Continued Examination.

II. Allowable subject matter.

Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating the allowable subject matter. On page 2 of the Office Action, the USPTO respectfully indicates that claims 4-7 and 9-12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims. Applicants respectfully accept the indicated allowable subject matter as noted in the following table, which summarizes the claim amendments:

Amended claim number	Previous claims on which amended claim is based
1	1 + 4
3	3 + 9

III. The objections to claim 1.

The USPTO respectfully objects to claim 1 because of informalities, respectfully alleging that "a plates" in claim 1 should be presented as "a pair of base plates."

Applicants respectfully believe that in the Amendment of November 22, 2005, claim 1 was amended to read "a base plate." In the event that this amendment was not entered,

applicants have respectfully re-indicated the deletion of the letter "s" from the word "plates," as shown with double brackets in amended claim 1 above.

Applicants further respectfully note that Figure 4 shows one possible embodiment of the apparatus claimed in claim 1, while Figure 1 shows one possible embodiment of an apparatus with a pair of base plates, as claimed in claim 3.

IV. The obvious rejections based on Takabayashi et al. (US 6,522,809).

The USPTO respectfully rejects claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Takabayashi.

As noted above, claims 1 and 3 have been amended to incorporate allowable claims 4 and 9, respectively. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that claims 1 and 3 are allowable.

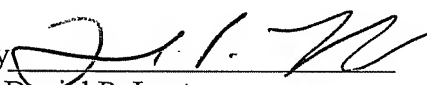
IV. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please contact the undersigned for any reason. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner including via telephone if convenient for the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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